Winning with Stock ACs

Many people think that Stock ACs are boring, anti-intellectual, and easy to refute. This happens because debaters treat the cases as throwaways and write lazily.

Four reasons stock cases are strategic:

1. Every judge is willing to vote for stock positions. You need at least one on each side because some judges are unwilling to hear untraditional cases.
2. Stock cases have relatively concise link stories, so you don’t need to make a lot of links to win your argument.
3. Stock cases have very predictable responses, so you can either have frontlines to the arguments or create a stock case that somehow circumvents the predictable responses.
4. Stock positions have the best evidence because their topic literature is easiest to find. Solid evidence forces your opponent into a predictable tagline debate instead of actually indicting your specific card.

Steps for writing a stock position:

1. Read topic literature to determine what positions will be straightforward and easy to run. Look for evidence with deep warrants. Also, look for evidence that is multi-functional – it should function under both standards. Further, the evidence should be specific to the wording of the resolution. Impact cards must be from topical articles or else you are likely conflating terms. Good evidence should make multiple arguments per function.
2. After determining your position and evidence, start writing a framework, only without spikes.
   1. Spikes are often a bad time trade-off.
   2. Laundry lists of spikes can turn judges off.
   3. You will become dependent on the spikes.
   4. Spikes can lead to contradictions because you cannot predict all Neg arguments.
   5. Spikes throw up a bunch of red flags.

Define ground in the round from contextual readings. You can define terms, but only when they’re necessary to determining the conflict of the resolution. For standards analysis, the standard must be tailored to the impacts of your 1AC so that you link easily but your opponent cannot link well. Second, you need multiple independent justifications for the standard with reasons why they matter. Third, you need reasons to prefer your standard, such as a stronger link to the resolution or specificity to an actor. Fourth, don’t run a generic standard because you will run into a massive block, and everything in the Neg’s expando will link into your standard. However, you can run a generic standard if you have a very big impact that will clearly outweigh.

1. On the contention level, remember that you need good evidence. Second, you need self-contained offense, offense which has all the necessary links in one place. Third, include either-or warrants because your opponent must respond to both arguments to stop the impact. Fourth, find good impacts: probable and of great magnitude. These should be self-contained in cards and have diverse impacts. Tailor the offense in the 1AC to turn impacts coming off the 1NC. Fifth, weighing in the AC relies on knowing how you will weigh against an NC. Sixth, do not include non-essential arguments that can be turned. You should be comfortable going for everything in the round in the 2AR. Seventh, keep the biggest argument in the round hidden at the bottom, but not in its own classification. Use subtle transition words to not call attention to the argument. Eighth, use nuanced rhetoric to avoid attracting blocks. For example, use “power” rather than “hegemony.”

Quirky strategies:

1. Use the same evidence as a common author only with a different name.
2. Put very turnable arguments at the top of the AC that have no link to the standard.
3. Use rhetoric to attract blocks that the blocks will not respond to.